(5) Coal washing & efficient utilization of coal

(6) Afforestation and conservation of forests

(7) Reduction of gas flaring

(8) Use of cleaner and lesser carbon intensive fuel for transport

(9) Encouraging Mass Rapid Transport systems

(10) Environmental quality management

(c) The depletion of the Ozone Layer results in an increase of UV-B and UV-C radiation reaching the earth's surface leading to skin and eye diseases. India is a party to the Vienna Convention for Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on substances that Deplete the Ozone layer. A country program was prepared in 1993 and is under implementation to phase-out production and consumption of Ozone Depleting Substances namely chloro-fluoro-carbons (CFCs), cartbontetra-chloro (CTC), halon, methyl bromide, methyl chloroform and hydro-choloro-fluoro-carbon (HCFCs). As per the control schedule of the Montreal Protocol, the production and consumption of CFC, halon and CTC are to be phased out by 2010. The production and consumption of methyl choloroform and methyl bromide are to be phased out by 2015 and production and consumption of HCFC are to be phased out by 2040.

(d) The major health problems that may occur due to such depletion of Ozone Layer pertain to skin Problems like Skin Cancer, Cancer Burn and Pterygium and Eye Problems like Cataracts and Degeneration of Macula. The facilities for treatment of Skin and Ophthalmic related diseases are available in the Central Government Hospitals. Moreover, a National programme for Control of Blindness is in operation in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

Pollution in Delhi

477. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether as per report of the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), Delhi is at risk of losing air quality because of rising pollution;

(b) if so, its salient features concerning Delhi; and

(c) what is the action plan of Government to control the high rise pollution in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) in one of its Press releases has indicated about consistent, sustained and aggressive action to be taken for further reduction in pollution levels in view of large increase in vehicle numbers in Delhi. The ambient air quality at seven locations (four residential, two industrial and one traffic intersection) in Delhi is monitored by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) under National Ambient Air Quality Programme (NAMP). The CPCB is also operating three continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations located at Sirifort, ITO traffic junction and Delhi College of Engineering. Based on the monitoring data for the winter months (November-February), the ambient air quality trends are as follows:

* The sulphur dioxide (SO_2) levels are almost having a decreasing trend in all the residential areas;
* The nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) concentration shows an increasing trend in residential and industrial areas;
* Mixed trend has been observed in case of Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM) and Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM) in all areas.

(c) the steps taken to abate air pollution in Delhi include—

* Notification of general and source specific environmental standards;
* Implementation of Bharat Stage-III emission norms, as provided in Auto Fuel Policy, from April 1, 2005, for both petrol and diesel driven new 4-wheeler vehicles and by introduction of Bharat-III compliant fuel;
* Introduction of improved Pollution Under Control (PUC) Certification system for in-use vehicles;
* Initiation of Source Apportionment Studies;
* Switchover to CNG mode of entire intra-city bus fleet;
* Use of washed coal (having ash not more than 34%) for all coal based thermal power plants of Delhi;

* Phasing out of more than 15 year old commercial transport vehicles;
* Implementation of stringent diesel-generator set emission norms;
* Regular monitoring for environmental compliance.

Shrinkage in acreage

478. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the shrinkage in acreage will lead to fall in oilseeds output;

(b) if so, the complete details thereof, State-wise;

(c) the reasons for such shrinkage;

(d) whether the dry spell in early part of the current monsoon discouraged many farmers in Andhra Pradesh to take up groundnut cultivation;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps being taken to help farmers in such circumstances?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Pollution index

†479. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI VINAY KATIYAR:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is at number three amongst the pollution spreading countries;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.